

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This chapter is dedicated to giving a deeper understanding of the study. It concerns theories that provide information to answer the questions about the study. A theoretical description consists of a set of theories to be explained and elaborated. This chapter will discuss theoretical framework related to grammatical error analysis in writing descriptive texts. In particular, it concerns concepts and existing theories relevant to the study's topic. It will discuss the concept of descriptive texts, the concept of grammatical errors analysis, sources of errors, and previous studies. Previous studies are a group of previous research studies that deal with the topic, which provide much information to thoroughly understand the subject of the study.

2.1. Concept of Descriptive Texts

In this section, the researcher provides the concept of descriptive texts specifically. First, it defines descriptive texts as one of the English written texts that seventh-grade students should master. Then, the language features of the texts will be used as a guideline to identify and analyze students' common grammatical errors in writing this text.

2.1.1. Definition of Descriptive Text

Writing might be said as the language skills which produce ideas in writing forms. According to Hornby (2003), writing is a process of expressing ideas on paper and then transforming those ideas into words to give a clearer picture of something. Furthermore, Hyland (2003) defines writing as sharing personal meanings that emphasize the individual's power to construct his or her views on a topic. It means that writing is a process of representing the writer's knowledge or message in texts. Based on the definitions above, the researcher concludes that writing is an activity of using language to communicate or share information with other people to express

ideas and messages in written form so the reader can easily understand about message or information clearly.

In the Indonesian curriculum, the Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC, hereafter) states that one of the English texts the seventh-grade students should learn is a descriptive text (MoEC, 2018). This text refers to describing, explaining, or defining something by relating it to already known things, so that the word becomes as vivid and real as possible (Langan, 2001). Furthermore, Kane (1988) states that “description is about sensory experience how something looks, sounds, and tastes” (p. 351). The definitions above imply that descriptive writing deals with the subject concretely and relies on sense impressions. For example, the students describe “My phone”, so the thing should be specific from its color, shape, and other features.

According to Doddy, Sugeng, and Effendi (2008), the generic structure of a descriptive text is divided into two parts: an identification and a description. The identification part is where the writer of the descriptive text identifies the phenomenon to be described. Meanwhile, the description part describes parts, qualities, and characteristics. The description part presents the appearance of things that occupy space, like objects, people, buildings or cities (Stanley, David, & Allen, 1992).

From the definitions above, it can be concluded that a descriptive text is a text that aims to describe certain things such as people, animals, objects, and places in a detailed manner. The described object can be a picture, character, or place in a story, animal, or person. Therefore, a descriptive text reproduces how things look, smell, taste, feel, or sound.

2.2.2. Language Features of Descriptive Texts

The language features of descriptive text are focused on the specific participants, using the simple present tense, nouns, adjectives, and verbs. These language features will be used to identify grammatical errors students often make in writing descriptive

texts. Jaya, Siswanto, and Rohmadi (2008) state that the language features of descriptive text consist of the following aspects.

Focus on the specific participant. The first aspect students have to do when they begin to write is to decide on a topic sentence. Boardman and Frydenberg (2008) define the topic sentence as the subject of the paragraph. A subject is a person or thing in a sentence or clause that operates the verb (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). Therefore, the students need to pay attention to the object they will describe because they have to be aware of the use of specific things in descriptive text.

Table 2. 1 Hyponym word

Specific	More Specific	Most Specific
Animal	Dog	Cart dog Turnspit dog Sled dog
	Lion	Barbary lion Nubian lion Asiatic lion
	Horse	Heavy horse Light horse Pony horse
	Bear	Grizzly bear Brown bear Polar bear

Source: Reid, Yonetani, and Schatz (1982)

The examples above show how to generate a single general word to be more specific. Focusing on a specific participant means that descriptive text should be focused on one immediate object that will be described. It is suggested to make the texts easy to conclude and help the reader focus on a subject liberally. Using specific nouns gives the readers a more concrete vision of what is being written and makes the passage more engaging and vivid.

Use of the simple present tense. The simple present tense is one of the tenses usually used in writing descriptive texts. The simple present is generally used to discuss things because it is not just about the ‘now’. It is used to say that something happens all the time or repeatedly.

Furthermore, this tense also describes general statements of a fact action or condition (Murphy, 1994), for example: The earth goes around the sun. It describes the fact that the earth always goes round. Other examples include ‘I usually go to school at 6.30 am’. This sentence illustrates a routine in which the writer usually goes to school at 6.30 am. Knapp and Watkins (2005) define that factual descriptions are written consistently in the present tense. Students have to use simple present tense to describe factual activities or daily habits when writing descriptive texts. Tenses refer to the capacity of verbs to express time. In terms of the predicate, the simple present tense is divided into two groups: verbal and nominal sentences. The students are able to use verbal sentences in the form of the verb (-s, es) of the third person singular. Meanwhile, the students are able to use nominal sentences in the form of the verb (to be) (Pratiwi, Susilawati, & Wardah, 2020).

The following tables concern the patterns of sentences in the simple present tense.

Table 2. 2. The pattern of verbal sentences in the simple present tense

The Pattern of Simple Present Tense	Example
(+) S+ V1+ s/es+ O	Dewi sees a beautiful flower. She eats noodles every day.
(-) S+ do/does+ not+ V1+O	Dewi does not see a beautiful flower. She does not eat noodles every day.
(?) Do/Does+ S+ V1+ O+?	Does Dewi see a beautiful flower? Does she eat noodles every day?

Note:

It needs “s/es” as the verb, using “He, She, It” as the subject.

“Do” is used if the subject “I, You, They”.

“Does” is used if the subject “He, She, It”.

“Do/does” is usually used to make negative or interrogative sentences.

An ending, either –s or –es, is added to the verb when the subject pronouns are he, she, it, or a noun these pronouns can replace (Suyoto & Shofiani, 1998).

Table 2. 3. The pattern of nominal sentences in the simple present tense

The Pattern of Simple Present Tense	Example
(+) S + to be (is, am, are) + N/Adj/Adv	I am a teacher She is a student
(-) S + to be (is, am, are) + not + N/Adj/Adv	I am not a teacher She is not a student
(?) Tobe (is, am, are) + S+ N/Adj/Adv	Am I a teacher? Is she a student?

Note:

“Am” is used for the subject “I”.

“Is” is used for the subject “He, She, It”.

“Are” is used for the subject “They, We, You”.

Those two tables show the use of the simple present tense in affirmative, negative, and interrogative sentences.

Noun. Among the part of speech, a noun is widely used in sentence constructions. It may function as a subject, object, or complement in a sentence (Burton-Roberts,

2021). He argues that nouns are rarely used as a single word in a sentence, but they are usually modified by other parts of speech, such as adjectives, adverbs, nouns, or verbs. In addition, Danesi (2006) said that noun is a word that allows to name and label the person, entities, places, and concepts that make up our world. This means that noun is one of the important parts of making good descriptive writing for the students. The students need the noun to arrange their idea to be a sentence. It conveys much of the content in a sentence; therefore, it is vitally important when phrasing, for example:

James is handsome.

The sentence above consists of a noun as the subject: *James*.

My sisters eat an apple.

The sentence above consists of two nouns: a subject (my sisters) and an object (an apple).

Adjective. Hutchinson (2005) explains that adjectives give more information about nouns or pronouns. It is because adjectives are used to describe colors, shapes, sizes, tastes, sounds, smells, and feelings. In addition, Savage and Shafiei (2007) also mention some characteristics of adjectives, such as:

An adjective usually precedes a noun. If the noun is singular, a/an or the is used before the adjective, for example :

I own an *antique* guitar.

My sister gives me a *big* hug.

An adjective can come after 'be'. When two adjectives come after be, separate them with and, for example :

These shoes are *comfortable and suitable* for me.

My father's expression is *serious*.

A noun phrase can also function as an adjective. Jeffries (2006) states that the functions of adjective are as the pre-modifier to the head noun in a noun phrase, for example :

A rose garden.

A pocket knife.

Murphy (1994) also adds that an adjective can come after a verb, for example :

You look tired.

The dinner smells good.

The characteristics of adjectives above help the learners to practice easier in writing descriptive texts.

Verb. According to Gelderen (2002) verb is a lexical category that often expresses a state, act, event, or emotion. In writing descriptive texts, the learners may use the action verb to describe the actual activity they have done. It shows the real activity that can be seen and heard, for example:

I go to school by bike.

The sentence above has the verb 'go', which clearly and precisely describes the action taken by the subject of the sentence clearly and precisely. It illustrates that the subject (I) does the action of going to school by riding a bike.

My cat eats a mouse.

The sentence above has the action verb 'eats', which describes the action taken by the subject of the sentence clearly and precisely. It illustrates that the subject (cat) does the action of eating the mouse.

Based on the explanations above, the researcher concludes that descriptive text as one of the English texts has some language features: focusing on a specific participant and using the simple present tense, nouns, adjectives, and verbs. The researcher will use

the language features of the descriptive text as a guideline to identify and analyze students' common grammatical errors in writing this text.

2.2. The Concept of Grammatical Errors

At this point, the researcher provides an overview of grammatical error analysis. The researcher explains how the grammatical errors will occur and how the researcher analyzes the errors.

2.2.1. Grammatical Errors Analysis

Larsen and Freeman (2000) define grammar as the rules of a language. Grammar is a system of meaningful structures and patterns governed by particular pragmatic constraints. Furthermore, Thornbury (1999) adds that grammar describes the rules for forming sentences, including an account of these forms' meanings. The other definitions come from Swan (1995). He defines grammar as the rules that show how words are combined, arranged, or changed to show certain kinds of meaning. These rules are internalized and subconsciously learned by native speakers. Based on the definitions above, it can be concluded that grammar is the rules of how words and their parts are combined to make sentences.

Students as learners certainly have made errors in the learning process. However, it is normal because studying by error is suitable for students' progress. Some experts give their opinions about error analysis. James (1998) further argues that error analysis is a process of determining the incidence, nature, causes and consequences of unsuccessful language. It means that error analysis can be useful for someone (such as a teacher or a researcher) to find a solution to the error so that it will not be repeated. The use of error analysis is a tool that investigates students' learning process in acquiring a second language by identifying, describing, analyzing, and explaining the learner's error.

Unarguably, students make errors that can be observed, analyzed, and classified to reveal something within students. This leads to a study of student errors called error

analysis. Errors may occur in the teaching and learning process caused by the teacher or the students themselves. For example, teachers may have less grammatical competence in teaching English, or students have different understandings or wrong perceptions regarding grammar, but they have stored that knowledge in their brains for a long time. In this case, the researcher analyzes grammatical errors in descriptive writing texts based on their language features and then will classify them according to Dulay et al. (1982) theory (omission, addition, misformation, misordering). This error analysis is used to analyze and find out what students commonly make kinds of grammatical errors in order to prevent them from repeating the same errors in writing descriptive texts.

2.2.2. Kinds of Grammatical Errors

For investigating students' grammatical errors in writing descriptive texts, the researcher will identify them according to the following types of grammatical errors:

Agreement. Verbs change their form to agree with their subjects. The difference in the form of a simple verb occurs in the present tense and the use of the third person singular. It is shown by adding 's/es', for example:

I/ You/ We/ They often wash the car.

She/ He/ It often washes the car.

In writing descriptive texts, students may have some errors in using agreement, for example:

She go to the market with her mother.

The sentence above is incorrect because the verb does not agree with the subject. Therefore, when the sentence is written in the present form, it should be written by adding 'es/s' in its verb for the third singular subject. So, the right sentence will be '*She goes to the market with her mother.*'

Tenses. According to Knapp and Watkins (2005), factual descriptions are generally written consistently in the present tense. Most of the students use the simple present tense in writing descriptive texts. However, they may have some errors in the use of tenses, for example:

He has a party every weekend, and his friends came to it.

The above example is incorrect because it describes habitual actions and facts. So, it should be written in the simple present tense form. The revised sentence becomes *'He has a party every weekend, and his friends come to it.'*

Noun. Batko and Rosenheim (2004) state that noun is one of the most important words we use in speaking and writing. In a similar way, they also mention that the function of a noun is to name something, such as a person, a place, an object, or an idea. In writing descriptive texts, students may have some errors in producing nouns, for example:

Two mans go to the field by motorcycle.

Many child do not make their homework.

The two sentences above are incorrect because of the inappropriate use of the noun. In this case, students should know the form of plural and singular noun. In addition, it describes the subject of more than one person, so it should use a plural noun, *'two men'* and *'many children'*.

Adjectives. An adjective modifies a noun or pronoun (Stobbe, 2008). Batko and Rosenheim (2004) state that adjectives are words that modify nouns and pronouns, such as beautiful places. In writing descriptive texts, students may have some errors in producing adjectives, for example:

My father is wise and amaze.

The sentence above is incorrect because of the inappropriate use of the adjective. The word 'amaze' is not an adjective but a verb, so correcting the sentence can be changed to '*amazed*' or '*amazing*'.

The caterpillar looks disgust.

The sentence above is incorrect because of the inappropriate use of the adjective. The word 'disgust' is not an adjective but a verb, so to correct the sentence it can be changed to '*disgusting*'.

Preposition. According to Harmer (1998), a preposition is a word used to show how other words are connected. Furthermore, Jeffries (2006) states that preposition has a similar meaning to subordinators because they link and show a meaningful relationship. Prepositions have objects but no subject and only one form, unlike verbs. In other words, the preposition is a particle or word equivalent used with a noun or pronoun to form a phrase, which usually performs the function of an adjective or an adverb.

There are three types of prepositions: simple, compound, and phrasal. A simple preposition is the simplest form consisting of a single preposition, such as at, during, from, into, of, without, between, among, above, or on. A compound preposition is formed by combining two words, and it cannot be expressed by only using the simple preposition, for example: along, before, beside. The last one is a phrasal preposition, consisting of two or more words written separately but used as a single unit to show a relation between nouns or a noun equivalent, for example, and in order to.

In writing descriptive texts, using the wrong preposition is common for the students. They are also often left out accidentally in writing, for example :

I go to school *in* foot.

The sentence above is incorrect because of the inappropriate use of prepositions. The sentence should be, '*I go to school on foot.*'

Pronoun. Azar (2002) says that a pronoun is used in place of a noun. In addition, pronouns can be used in place of nouns to avoid monotonous repetition (Stobbe, 2008). It means that pronoun is used to substitute for more complex nouns and noun phrases to make the language more efficient and avoid repetition. A pronoun replaces the words for people, places, or things, for example, I, you, we, myself, himself, themselves.

In writing descriptive text, using the wrong pronoun is a common thing for the students, for example:

I visited I brother.

Based on the sentence example above, there is an error in using pronouns as the subject. It should be written '*I visited my brother.*'

My sister is Maria. He is a teacher.

Based on the sentence above, there is an error in using pronouns as the object. It should be written '*My sister is Maria. She is a teacher.*'

Article. There are two types of articles: definite (the) and indefinite (a/an) (Maratsos, 1976). He defines that definite articles tell us that the noun refers to a specific thing, whereas indefinite articles refer to classes of things. However, not all languages use articles, so students from several languages other than English can omit them from their spoken and written English. Furthermore, articles inform readers that a noun or noun group will soon follow, for example:

The park is located in the city center. (Definite)

A car hits a power pole. (Indefinite)

Furthermore, definite or indefinite articles can also be used for the singular, and no article should be used for the plural, for example:

The tiger is an animal.

A tiger is an animal.

Tigers are animals.

In writing descriptive texts, students may have some errors in the use of the article, for example:

I have a hour to finish my assignment.

In the sentence above, the use of the article is incorrect. The word 'hour' will be read 'ou(ə)r with a vowel prefix, so the correct article is 'an'.

Based on the above explanation, students commonly make many kinds of grammatical errors, namely agreement, tenses, nouns, adjectives, prepositions, pronouns, and articles. Those common grammatical error types will be used to investigate students' grammatical errors in writing descriptive texts.

The following section will elaborate on a tool to analyze errors. This part highlights the surface strategy taxonomy proposed by Dulay et al. (1982) to classify students' grammatical errors. They classified errors into four types, namely addition, omission, misformation, and misordering.

2.2.3. Surface Strategy Taxonomy to analyze errors

One way to explain the error analysis is using a surface strategy taxonomy. The grammatical errors identified based on the language features of descriptive text will be classified into several types according to surface strategy taxonomy. The surface strategy taxonomy highlights how surface structures are altered (Dulay et al., 1982). It means that learners may omit necessary items or add unnecessary ones. They may misform items or misorder them. It can be concluded that the surface strategy taxonomy can explain grammatical errors made by someone. Through the surface strategy taxonomy, it would be easy to know how far a student's ability to understand grammatical language is.

Additionally, the presence of errors in the description can be obtained from the surface strategy taxonomy so that the teacher can find the solution to the errors made by the students. Therefore, surface strategy taxonomy is needed by English teachers to know students' errors. Based on the location of the fault, surface strategy taxonomy consists of four elements of errors: Omission, addition, misformation, and misordering (Dulay et al., 1982).

Omission. Omission errors are specified by the absence of an item that should appear. Furthermore, Klassen (1991) states that errors of omission are errors where some elements are omitted which should be present. It means that the learners may omit the items that should appear in a well-formed utterance. The omission has two types of morpheme: lexical morphemes and grammatical morphemes (Dulay et al., 1982). Lexical morphemes are words that carry the bulk of the referential meaning of a sentence because they have sense and meaning by themselves, like nouns, verbs, and adjectives (Dulay et al., 1982). Then, the grammatical morphemes are words that function to specify the relationship between one lexical morpheme and another: verb suffix (-s/-es), articles, and prepositions, for example :

Rose make a banana cake.

The sentence example above is an omission of grammatical morpheme 'verb suffix -s'. It is not grammatically correct because of the missing verb suffix -s. It would be '*Rose makes a banana cake*' by adding verb suffix -s because it describes the general statement of a factual action, and the subject is the third person singular.

Marry is the president of the new.

The example above is called an omission of lexical morpheme because of the missing word that should be present. It would be '*Marry is the president of the new company*' to make it grammatically correct.

Addition. Addition errors contrast omission errors identified by the presence of an item that must not appear in a well-formed utterance. There are three types of additions: double marking, regularization, and simple addition.

The first type is double marking. Double marking is two items marked for the same feature. It is interpreted as a failure to remove certain items required in some linguistic abbreviation but not in order. Students often place the marker for both auxiliary and verb. For example, She did not understood the lesson yesterday. From the example, the student wants to say, '*She did not understand the lesson yesterday*'. She knows that she has to use the past verb to tell past events; however, she puts two items for the same features: *did not* and *understood*.

Regularization is the second type of addition. Regularization errors within the addition category are when a marker typically included a linguistic item is erroneously added to exceptional items of the given class that do not take a marker. Regularization error occurs when learners add morphemes to the exceptional words. The rules usually apply to classes of linguistic items such as main verb classes or noun classes, for example, 'The students want to say many childs'. From the example, the learner wants to tell that the students want to say '*many children*.' So, they must know the differences between plural and singular nouns in many exceptional words.

The last type concerns simple addition. No special features characterize simple addition other than those of all addition errors using items that should not appear in well-formed sentence, for example, 'I am in here'. From the example, the use of 'in' is useless, and it will be well-formed sentence if the students omit the word '*in*'.

Misformation. The use of the wrong morpheme or structure is the main characteristic of misformation errors. In this error, students supply something although it is incorrect. There are three misformation types: regularization errors, archi forms, and alternating forms.

The first type is regularization. Regularization errors that belong to the misformation category are those in which a regular marker is utilized in place of an irregular one, for example, 'Nowadays, there are many phenomenon happen because the globalization'. From the sentence example, the student failed to recognize the plural form of the word 'phenomenon'. Because there is 'many', it should be changed into plural form *phenomena*.

Archi form is the second type of misformation. The selection of a member of a class of form to represent others in the class is a common characteristic of all stages of second language acquisition. One of the examples of archi forms is 'There are a doll in the chair'. The sentence example is incorrect due to archi forms 'be' misformation. The copula or to be should be adjusted with the subject, whether singular or plural subject and object. Hence, the revised sentence would be *There is a doll in the chair*'.

The last type of misformation is alternating form. As the students' vocabulary and grammar grow, alternating forms often give away to the relatively free alternation of various members of the class with each other, for example, 'Jasmin is beautiful, and he likes singing'. The sentence example is incorrect due to the misformation of the alternating forms 'pronoun'. The pronoun in the second sentence should be adjusted with the subject in the first sentence. Hence, the revised sentence should be *Jasmin is beautiful and she likes singing*'.

Misordering. The incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance characterizes misordering errors, for example, 'I yesterday went to Surabaya'. From the example, the items are correct, but the writer does not put them in the appropriate order; it should be written *I went to Surabaya yesterday*'.

Regarding to the above explanations, it can be concluded that surface strategy taxonomy is a theory that explains error analysis. It has four elements: error omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. The researcher will use those four elements

to classify students' common grammatical errors in writing descriptive texts. In the following paragraphs, the potential source of errors will be elaborated.

2.2.4. Sources of Errors

By analyzing students' grammatical errors in writing descriptive texts, the researcher will know the source of errors students make in writing descriptive texts. There are several sources of error made by the students in learning a foreign language. According to Brown (2000), four categories source errors in learning a foreign language: interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, the context of learning, and communication strategies.

Interlingual Transfer. Brown (2000) states that the beginning stages of learning a foreign language are characterized by interlingual transfer from the native language. For example, English students say “the book of Jane” instead of “Jane’s book”. So, it can be concluded that interlingual transfer is an error caused by the mother tongue’s interference of the learners to the foreign language which is learned.

Intralingual Transfer. An intralingual transfer is a major factor in foreign language learning (Richards, 1974). He describes intralingual errors as those that reflect rules' general characteristics and failure to learn conditions under which rules apply. These errors occur due to the difficulty in the structure of EFL and are made by students at a phase when they are not fully knowledgeable about the target language. Intralingual errors reflect the students' competence at a particular stage and portray some general language acquisition characteristics.

Context of Learning. The third major source of error is the context of learning. The context here refers to the classroom with its teacher and its material in school learning or the social situation of untutored foreign language learning. The teacher or the textbook can possibly lead the students to make a faulty hypothesis about the language in a classroom context. Students often make errors because they have a misleading explanation from the teacher, faulty presentation of the structure or word

in the textbook, or even because of the pattern that is memorized in a drill but not properly contextualized (Brown, 1994).

Communication Strategies. Communication strategy is the conscious employment of verbal mechanisms for communicating an idea when linguistic forms are unavailable to the students for some reason (Brown, 2000).

According to the above explanation, it can be concluded that the source of error has four categories: Interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, the context of learning, and communication strategies. These sources will be applied to analyze the students' grammatical errors in writing descriptive texts to benefit the teacher to find out the solution to the errors made by students.

2.3. Previous Studies

This section will specifically discuss previous studies identifying and analyzing grammatical errors in writing English texts. It will be organized on two primary parts: types and sources of errors and factors affecting the errors.

2.3.1. Types and sources of errors

Rachmawati (2018) conducted research entitled "An Analysis of Grammatical Errors in Writing Descriptive Text among the Eight Grade of Junior High School 3 Batanghari. The objective of this study was to find out the grammatical errors that were dominantly produced by the eight-grade students at Junior High School 3 Batanghari in writing descriptive texts. The writer used students' results in writing descriptive texts as the research instrument. In this case, the researcher asked for the descriptive text products that the students had made. The researcher analyzed the data by the Creswell analysis technique, which consisted of five steps: organizing and preparing data, reading the data, beginning detailed analysis with a coding process, using the coding process, and interpreting the data. The analyses showed that the students made omission of verb inflexion (suffix -s), accounting for 98 errors or 27.84%, misformation of the use of the article (28 errors or 7.96%), then followed by

addition of the use of tenses (three errors or 0.85%). The researcher explained that the errors came from many factors. The students' limited vocabulary in writing the descriptive text was the most common factor. The second source of errors was the students' native language interference. They just tried to translate the words one by one from Indonesian into English without paying attention to the English grammatical rules. Some factors that caused the errors above affected the students' difficulty constructing good sentences and tended to make errors in writing descriptive texts. This study indicated that the errors were primarily affected by the nature of the national examination, emphasizing grammatical dimensions.

Sadiyah and Royani (2019) from IKIP Siliwangi did a study entitled "An Analysis of Grammatical Errors in Students' Writing Descriptive Text". This study's objective was to know some common errors made by the seven-grade students of State Senior High School 3 Cimahi in writing descriptive paragraphs. In collecting data, the researchers used a formative assessment of a descriptive text of the participants as the research instrument. The researcher classified and quantified the errors based on the data obtained. The result of the research indicated that students made omission errors in using verb inflexion *suffix -s/es* (43 errors or 41%), misformation errors in using pronouns (19 errors or 18%), and misformation errors in using noun (16 errors or 15%). Furthermore, the researcher revealed that the errors are caused by the mother tongue's interference of the students to the foreign language which is learned. The students are still influenced by their native language linguistic system, leading them to make errors in writing the sentence.

2.3.2. Factors affecting students' errors

The body of the literature has acknowledged that among the many factors affecting students' errors are the national examination and the nature of formative assessment. In this study, the term 'factor' refers to the fact or situation that influences the result of

something {Walter, 2005}. The following paragraphs will elaborate on each of the factors.

In term of national examination, Endriyati and Anggraeni (2019) revealed on their study that the teachers treat English as a subject and are not concerned with acquiring skills. It indicates that the national examination will influence teachers' teaching materials and techniques. Mukminin et al. (2013) argue that what students learn inside the classrooms at school and a tutoring institution is predominantly directed to preparing them for the exam. In those cases, the textbooks are designed to match the purposes of an exam that contains the material for the national examination rather than the basic competence.

Popham (2008) and Owen (2016), in their study, found out that formative assessment was one of the sources of errors their students did. The formative assessment is a process used by teachers and students during the learning process to provide ongoing feedback in order to improve students' achievement of intended instructional outcomes (Popham, 2008). Consequently, because formative assessment is simply used to monitor student learning and provide ongoing feedback to the students and teacher, they are less likely to be afraid of making errors or taking risks (Owen, 2016). It means that formative assessments have low stakes and usually carry no grade. In other words, they just focus on the feedback they would receive rather than the grade they have to earn. So, it caused the students to ignore the grammatical rules in compiling the sentences and tend to make some grammatical errors in writing descriptive texts.

From the paragraphs above, there emerge similarities among the previous studies. They emphasized student learning outcomes in writing specific English texts and explained grammatical errors made by students. Meanwhile, this research will elaborate on students' grammatical errors in using language features of a descriptive text. Furthermore, the data of the studies above employed quantitative or qualitative methods. This study will utilize both methods in which the quantitative method is to

quantify students' grammatical errors, and the qualitative one is to analyze the sources of students' errors in writing descriptive texts.

Regarding the previous studies, the researcher was interested in investigating the common grammatical errors seventh-grade students make in writing descriptive texts. By knowing the grammatical errors and sources of errors, the teacher will make a better technique to teach descriptive texts to the seventh-grade students at junior high schools. Furthermore, Khan and Khan (2016) state that error analysis can assist teachers in finding out the difficult area of English subject in which students find difficulty in learning language especially writing skills. Besides, it will also ease the teachers and syllabus designers to discover beneficial remedial material for solving the errors. So, it will contribute to the advancement of the education field.

